

# Crisis Education Project Profile

March 2005

## Project: **Community-Based Psychosocial Program (Phase 2)**

**Locations:** KOSOVO (27 Centers for Social Welfare  
and 8 Municipalities)

**Implementing Organization:** CARE International in Kosovo

**Type of Programming:** Psychosocial training and programming for children

**Target group/beneficiaries:** Children, teachers, Social Workers, and communities

**Stage:** Transitional (post-conflict)

### **Environmental Context of the Program**

**SOCIAL:** The *Qualitative Poverty Assessment of Kosovo*<sup>1</sup> indicates that most “children from poor households rarely receive more than a primary and even less a secondary education.” The World Bank’s Kosovo Poverty Assessment concludes as well that, “access to education is limited for girls, particularly in rural areas, and for the Muslim Slavs, Roma and Turks.”<sup>2</sup> Retention rates of marginalized groups are apparently quite low. In the context of the rural poor this occurs for many reasons. Some children (often girls) are joint breadwinners. In other cases families who have limited financial resources, prioritize the education of older males above younger siblings and girls. Children are obliged to work on the farm in villages, or to sell cigarettes, telephone cards, and other small items in towns. For ethnic minorities this is exacerbated by the intolerance of the mainstream community, which often poses security problems inside and outside the classroom.

**CULTURAL/RELIGION:** According to the Living Standard Measurement Survey 2000, it is estimated that 60 percent of the population live in rural areas with 88% of the population defined as ethnic Kosovo Albanians. The Serbian population is estimated at 7 percent while other ethnic groups (Slav Muslims, Romas, and Turkish) account for 5 percent of the total population.

**ECONOMIC:** Kosovo is a small, landlocked territory in the center of the Balkan Peninsula and borders Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, and Montenegro. Its area is 10,877 sq km., which is about one-third the size of Belgium. Kosovo is presently divided into five regions and 30 municipalities. It is densely populated with almost 200 persons per sq. km. According to the Living Standard Measurement Survey 2000, 12 percent of the population is extremely poor and another almost 40 percent is poor. Another particularity of the population is the shortage of males, aged 20 to 50, mainly by emigration for economic reasons.

<sup>1</sup> 2001, Inter-Agency Sub-Group on Poverty, *Qualitative Poverty Assessment Kosovo – Final Report and Analysis of Data*.

<sup>2</sup> 2001, Kosovo Poverty Assessment Volume 1: Main Report, Draft, World Bank, July 2001.

**Political Relationships:** The United Nations is gradually handing over substantial responsibilities for autonomy in Kosovo to the local government with the establishment of an elected local parliament government and the creation of 8 ministries headed by local people. The parliament is the vehicle for the phased transfer of substantial responsibilities from the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to the Institutions of Provisional Self Government.

### **Program Description**

**TARGET GROUP:** The program aimed to empower professionals and parents to appropriately address the psychosocial needs of children in Kosovo affected by the conflict. The purpose of the program was to promote the well being of children by advocating their right to psychosocial assistance.

**MATERIAL/PHYSICAL RESOURCES:** The CBPP Phase II project initially used schools as the vehicle for addressing children's needs, and later moved the emphasis away from stress and trauma toward a concentrated effort on addressing community issues and their effects on the well-being of children. The program focused on a holistic approach involving teachers, parents, and the community.

**HUMAN RESOURCES:** The program facilitated capacity building of social workers; facilitation of teacher peer counseling groups, community outreach and specific teacher training; and implemented a territory-wide media campaign focusing on Family Violence and its affect on children.

**COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION:** The slogan propagating "Family Violence as a Crime" was spread through urban and rural communities of Kosovo via a range of media forms, and the capacities of three women's groups to carry out activities against family violence was developed. This project ran two parallel activities consisting of a public media campaign linked to community discussion forums against Family Violence. Three municipalities were targeted working through local community-based organizations and NGOs as key facilitators of these community discussion groups. Three themes were presented through a series of television program broadcasts:

1. Definition of what Family Violence is (violence against children, women, elderly parents, etc.), and the abuse of the power relationships within the family that are frequently the root cause of the violence;
2. Examination of the extent in which Family Violence exists in Kosovo. The program forum included telephone call-ins and victim interviews; and,
3. Identifying ways in which the community can respond to Family Violence.

**TEACHER TRAINING CURRICULUM:** Primary school teachers and Social Workers participated in training to promote their understanding of psycho-social issues and how to address these issues in the classroom and community. The training focused on:

- Increasing rural teachers and parents access to post-conflict counseling;
- Improving teachers' ability to support each other and connect parent through working together in counseling support groups.
- Enhancing living condition of children through teachers and parents being in regular contact and exchange with (mental) health professionals.
- Equipping teachers with tools and skills to improve the psychosocial well-being of primary school children in an empowering learning environment.

### *Module 1: Child Development and Mental Health Issues in School*

Beginning of life and development of human being - Life stages and development - Important factors in child development - Stress and trauma - Aggressive Child - Children with difficulties in learning and teaching process

### *Module 2: Progress and Evaluation towards Success in the Classroom*

Interactive methods in decreasing behavioral disorders - Methods of modern valuation - Establishing positive relationships between teacher and learner - Group work in the classroom as a necessary support - Methods for achieving better success in the classroom - Practical methods for stimulation of democracy in the classroom - Education of children with special demands

### *Module 3: Empowering Teachers*

Support Groups - Incorporation of the community to design and address problems - Identification of problems in community and their effects in the classroom - Including teachers in composing educational programs and classroom activities - Children with difficulties in educational program

### *Module 4: Dealing with Community Problems in the Classroom*

Violence against children - Reflection of Family Violence in the classroom - Prevention of child abuse - Enlargement of Teaching Environment - Communication Skills - Advantages of volunteer work in the school

## **Programming Interventions: Impact and Effectiveness**

**QUALITY:** As a result of the training, teachers initiated peer support groups in their respective schools. During field monitoring visits, CARE found that teachers were also using the peer support groups as intervention groups to carry-out home visits and to formulate treatment schedules for children. This unexpected positive outcome lead CARE to contract a local NGO partner, the Centre for the Promotion of Education (CPE), to provide mentors to assist the teachers in strengthening their support groups in schools. The training program also helped teachers recognize their own limitations, and identify referral agencies for special cases (e.g. child abuse, etc.). The success of the program was in large part due to the quality and professionalism of local and international partners. When possible local resources/ expertise was used to promote a more sustainable strategy as well as build the capacity of local partners to implement these types of programs without the need to rely on external assistance. The programme activities were made possible through the support and partnerships established with the University of Pristina, Neuro-Psychiatric Clinic, Centre for the Promotion of Education, RTK television station in Pristina/Prishtine, the Council for the Defence of Human Rights, and various women's organizations.

**OVERALL PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS:** The program has contributed to redefining psychosocial by reducing the emphasis on medical interventions and addressing the needs of enhancing community capacities and coping mechanisms. In the CBPP model, strategies focus on the community, and its ability to deal with trauma and stress resulting from the conflict. The approach supersedes the clinical treatment of the individual and re-drew the defining lines between mental health and psychosocial. One significant achievement was the creation of strong multi-ethnic cooperation and collaboration in project implementation. CARE's Albanian staff and the Serb training participants were able to overcome initial weariness and effectively work together to implement the program. The duration of the media campaign (awareness of family violence) and the delivery of Teacher Training Curriculum to make it appropriate and responsive to issues and problems faced by ethnic minority children was in fact too short. There still remains significant psychosocial problems within minority areas, which should be addressed over a longer period of time to include on-sight counseling, mentoring, etc. Media campaigns and outreach to groups on other social issues, particularly child protection issues is also needed.

**EQUIP1: Building Educational Quality through Classrooms, Schools, and**

**Communities** is a multi-faceted program designed to raise the quality of classroom teaching and the level of student learning by effecting school-level changes. EQUIP1 serves all levels of education, from early childhood development for school readiness, to primary and secondary education, adult basic education, pre-vocational training, and the provision of life-skills. Activities range from teacher support in course content and instructional practices, to principal support for teacher performance, and community involvement for improving school management and infrastructure. EQUIP1 works with food for education issues and contributes to the provision of education and training in crisis and post-crisis environments.

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is the lead organization responsible for implementing EQUIP1 and is joined by fourteen outstanding partners: Academy for Educational Development, Aga Khan Foundation USA, CARE, Discovery Channel Global Education Fund, Education Development Center, Howard University, International Reading Association, The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, Juárez & Associates, Inc., Michigan State University, Save the Children, Inc., Sesame Workshop, University of Pittsburgh, and World Education, Inc..

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